

Yalta Conference

In February 1945 Franklin Roosevelt of the USA, Joseph Stalin of the USSR and Winston Churchill met at Yalta in the Soviet Union. The war in Europe was nearing its end and decisions had to be made about how to organize Europe after the war.

Decisions:

The Allies decided the following:

- Germany was to be defeated and then disarmed. It was to be split into four zones of occupation – the Big Three plus France. Germany would also have to pay reparations.
- In Eastern Europe countries were to be allowed to hold free elections to choose how they would be governed.
- In Poland free elections were to be held. The eastern frontier was to return to the pre-1921 position.
- The USSR was to join the war against Japan three months after Germany's defeat.
- A United Nations Organization was to be set up.
- The Soviet Union had suffered terribly in the war. An estimated 20 million Soviet people had died. Stalin was therefore concerned about the future security of the USSR. The Big Three agreed that Eastern Europe should be seen as 'a Soviet sphere of influence'.

Tensions:

There were already differences between East and West:

- The Western Allies were concerned because the USSR wanted Poland's western frontier moved into Germany and the German population removed. Stalin argued that Poland, in turn could move its borders westwards into German territory. Churchill did not approve of Stalin's plans for Poland, but he also knew that there was not very much he could do about it because Stalin's Red Army was in total control of both Poland and eastern Germany. Roosevelt was also unhappy about Stalin's plan, but Churchill persuaded Roosevelt to accept it, as long as the USSR agreed not to interfere in Greece where the British were attempting to prevent the Communists taking over. Stalin accepted this.
- They disagreed over how much Germany was to pay in reparations. Stalin wanted to fix a sum that the West thought was too large. The decision was postponed.

Task: – What was going on behind the scenes at Yalta?

The war against Hitler had united Roosevelt, Stalin and Churchill and at the Yalta Conference they appeared to get on well. The Source below illustrates the 'public' face of Yalta:

"I want to drink to our alliance, that it should not lose its ... intimacy, its free expression of views ... I know of no such close alliance of three Great Powers as this ... May it be strong and stable, may we be as frank as possible." – Stalin, proposing a toast at a dinner at the Yalta Conference, 1945

But what was going on behind the scenes?

One: – Using the quotes over the page, fill in the table below:

Evidence of disagreement:	Evidence of agreement:	Reasons why the source is reliable or unreliable:

Source One: – Stalin speaking to a fellow Communist Milovan Djilas, in 1945. Djilas was a supporter of Stalin.

“Perhaps you think that just because we are the allies of the English we have forgotten who they are and who Churchill is. There’s nothing they like better than to trick their allies. During the First World War they constantly tricked the Russians and the French. And Churchill? Churchill is the kind of man who will pick your pocket of a kopeck! (A kopeck is a low value Soviet coin). And Roosevelt? Roosevelt is not like that. He dips in his hand only for bigger coins. But Churchill? He will do it for a kopeck.”

Source Two: – Milovan Djilas writing about Yalta in 1948

“In the hallway (at Yalta) we stopped before a map of the world on which the Soviet Union was colored in red. Stalin waved his hand over the Soviet Union and exclaimed, “They (Roosevelt and Churchill) will never accept the idea that so great a space should be red, never, never!”

Source Three: – Written by Soviet Historian

“Once Churchill asked Stalin to send him the music of the new Soviet Russian anthem so that it could be broadcast before the summary of the news from the Soviet German front. Stalin sent the words (as well) and expressed hope that Churchill will set about learning the new tune and whistling it to members of the Conservative Party. While Stalin behaved with relative discretion with Roosevelt, he continually teased Churchill throughout the war.

Source Four: – Churchill writing to Roosevelt shortly after the Yalta Conference

“The Soviet Union has become a danger to the free world. A new front must be created against her onward sweep. This front should be Far East as possible. A settlement must be reached on all major issues between West and East in Europe before the armies of democracy melt.”

Source Five: – A Soviet Cartoon. Churchill is shown with two flags, the first proclaiming that ‘Anglo-Saxons must rule the world’ and the other threatening an ‘Iron Curtain’.

Source Six: – Written by Christopher Cuplin in a school textbook, The Modern World, 1984

“(At Yalta) Churchill feared that Roosevelt was too pro-Russian. He pressed for a French zone to be added to the other three to add another anti-Russian voice to the armies of occupation.”

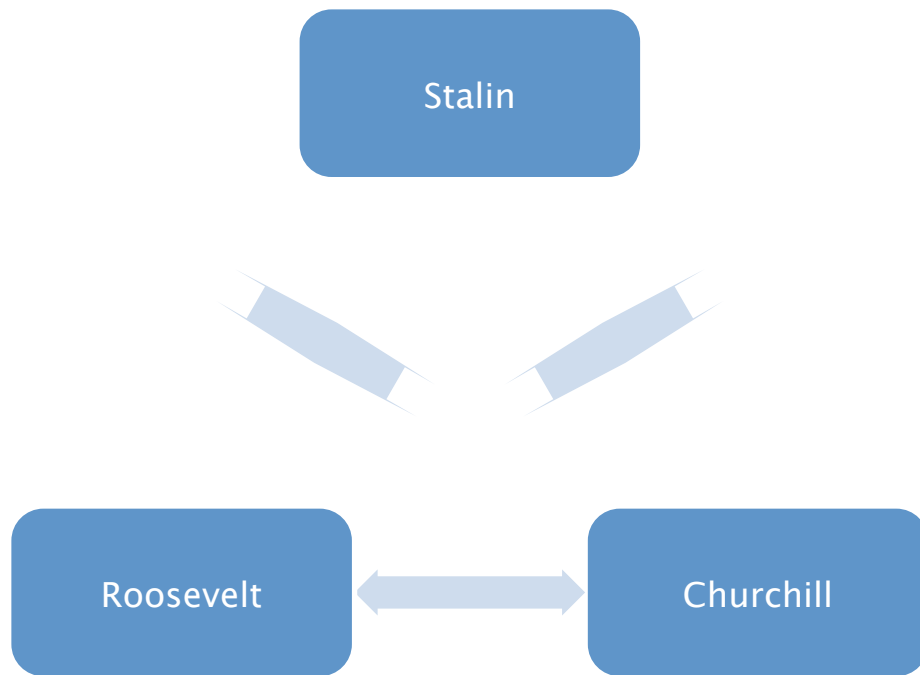
Source Seven: – Milovan Djilas comments, in 1948 on Stalin’s assessment of Churchill

“One could see that Churchill had left a deep impression on the Soviet leaders as a farsighted and dangerous statesman – although they did not like him.”

Source Eight: – Written by historian Hugh Higgins in The Cold War, 1974

“(In May 1945) Churchill ordered Montgomery to keep the German arms intact, in case they had to be used against the Russians.”

Two: – Using the diagram below and your knowledge at this point in time, summarise what each of the leaders thought of one another.



Yalta and Potsdam: Start of the Cold War

Name _____



[illegible]

Roosevelt...

Churchill...

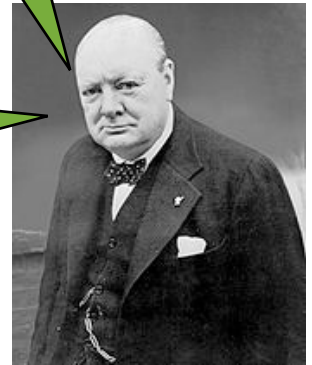


Stalin...

Stalin...



Roosevelt...



Churchill...